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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

RIFLE-CLUBS

Seventeen copies printed at the Marion Press,
Jamaica, Queensborough, New-York,
November, 1899.

Number 17
Dodd, Mead & Company.

RIFLE-CLUBS

BY

ALFRED TENNYSON

WRITTEN IN 1859
NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME PRINTED

NEW-YORK
1899

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NOTE.

ON the ninth of May, eighteen hundred fifty-nine, there appeared in the London *Times* Tennyson's poem, "There is a sound of thunder afar,"—there entitled "The War" and signed simply "T." Its authorship was not acknowledged until long after, nor was it reprinted by the author until 1892, when it appeared in the volume "The Death of Oenone, Akbar's Dream, and other Poems," with the title "Riflemen, Form!" and the note "I have been asked to republish this old poem, which was first published in 'The Times,' May 9, 1859, before the Volunteer movement began."

Doctor Alfred Gatty has said that he received the manuscript from Tennyson, on May 5, 1859, "with permission that it might appear anonymously in some country paper, as the Poet Laureate's name might not

be attached to a political poem." In that manuscript was another stanza, struck out before publication:

"Form, for France is dumb in her chains;
"Form, for yours is the one free land;
"Yours is the one free voice that remains.
"Save the voice, and practise the hand."

At the time it was written there seemed danger of a Continental alliance against England and an invasion of the British Islands by the French. The poem "rang like a trumpet-call through the length and breadth of the Empire," and may have been the cause of the order issued by the War Office a few days later authorizing the formation of volunteer rifle corps.

Before he wrote and published this appeal to the men of England to rally to the defense of their country he had, in the excitement of the times, written a more vigorous poem, "Rifle-Clubs," here first printed from the original manuscript, which he sent, almost before the ink was dry, to Coventry Patmore, from

whose family it now comes forth to the world. He himself says, in a note to the original manuscript, "Very wild, but I think too savage! written in about 2 minutes! The authorship a most deep secret! mind, Mr. P.!"

His better judgment prevailed, however, and that poem was not printed. In its place he apparently wrote the milder one with the same refrain.

RIFLE-CLUBS

L. of C.

Rifle = Clubs !!!

Riflemen, form in two & three
From John O' Groats house to the wilds lands end!
Practice & fire, Practice & fire
God, He knows what an how may send,
Ready be ready to meet the storm!
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen form!

Riflemen, form, in town and in shire,

From John O'Groat's house to the wild land's end!

Practice and fire, practice and fire,—

God, He knows what an hour may send.

Ready, be ready, to meet the storm!

Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!

Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!

We thought them friends & we lent them Love,
But now the traitors & tyrant rules:
And Waterloo from year to year
Has rankled in the hearts of the fools.

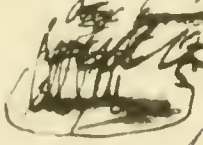
We love peace but the French love storm,
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, Riflemen, Riflemen, form!

We thought them friends and we had them here;
But now the traitor and tyrant rules,
And Waterloo from year to year
Has rankled in the hearts of the fools.
We love peace, but the French love storm;
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!

Ready, be ready! they mean no good.

Ready, be ready! the times are wild!

Bearded monkeys of lust & blood



coming to
violate woman & child!

We love liberty: they love storm:

Riflemen, form! riflemen, form

Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!

Ready, be ready! they mean no good:
Ready, be ready! the times are wild!
Bearded monkeys of lust and blood
Coming to violate woman and child!
We love liberty: they love storm:
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!

Workmen, workmen, away with your strikes!
Close with your masters! sound an alarm!
Get your weapons, muskets & pikes!
Close with your masters & arm & arm!

For love freedom: the French love storm:
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, Riflemen, Riflemen, form.

Workmen, workmen, away with your strikes!
Close with your masters! sound an alarm!
Get you weapons, muskets and pikes!
Close with your masters, and arm and arm!
You love freedom: the French love storm:
Riflemen, form! Riflemen, form!
Riflemen, riflemen, riflemen, form!

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